

PUBLIC NOTICE – ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

September 7, 2006 to October 6, 2006

TYPE OF RESPONSE:

Environmental Assessment

The Department of Environmental Quality is reviewing the Exotic Plant Management Environmental Assessment (EA).

PURPOSE OF NOTICE:

To invite the public to comment on the state's response to the environmental aspects of a proposed project.

NAME OF AGENCY PROPOSING THE PROJECT:

United States Department of the Interior; National Park Service; Blue Ridge Parkway.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Environmental Assessment (EA) identifies the presence and spread of exotic plant species as a significant concern to park management. The EA defines the term "exotic" as "a species occurring in a given place as a result of direct or indirect, deliberate, or accidental actions by humans" (USDI 1991) and is used synonymously with "alien", "non-native" and "introduced". Many exotic plants are ecologically harmful. The invasion of exotic species is one of the most serious problems of national parks. Exotics invade and colonize parks by every possible means and frequently harm or altogether displace native species. If exotics are not aggressively controlled, the National Park System is at risk of losing a significant portion of its native biological resources. The EA describes the Purpose and Need for the Blue Ridge Parkway's Exotic Plant Management Plan, and analyzes the environmental impacts that would result from the alternatives considered, including the No Action alternative.

HOW A DECISION IS MADE:

DEQ's Office of Environmental Impact Review coordinates the Commonwealth's response to environmental documents for proposed state and federal projects. DEQ distributes the documents to appropriate state agencies, planning districts and localities for their review and comment. Upon consideration of all comments, DEQ prepares a single state response.

HOW TO COMMENT:

DEQ accepts comments from the public by e-mail, fax or postal mail. All comments must include the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ within the comment period.

TO REVIEW THE PROJECT DOCUMENTS:

The public may review paper-copies of the documents at DEQ's central office in Richmond every work day by appointment. Electronic-copies of the documents are available at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?projectId=10198&documentID=16631>.

CONTACT FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS, DOCUMENT REQUESTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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